

Vermont Department of Health

Advisory #1: Influenza Vaccine Supply and Recommendations for Prioritization During the 2005-06 Influenza Season

TO: Health care providers involved in the administration of influenza vaccine and those who may have patients seeking a vaccine

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This Advisory contains the following:

- Update on the supply of influenza vaccine for the 2005–06 flu season.
- Recommendations for prioritization of influenza vaccine for the 2005–06 flu season.
- Availability of influenza vaccine for Vaccine for Children (VFC) Providers.

Update on the supply of influenza vaccine for the 2005–06 flu season

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), three manufacturers are expected to supply inactivated influenza vaccine – the flu shot - to the U.S. for the 2005-06 flu season. Collectively, they expect to supply enough vaccine throughout the next several months to avert the shortages like those seen in previous years. However, as there are uncertainties regarding production of inactivated influenza vaccine, the exact number of available doses and the timing of vaccine distribution remains unknown.
- In addition to the supply of inactivated influenza vaccine, the live-attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) – FluMist™ – will be available again this year. This vaccine can be used in healthy, non-pregnant persons aged 5-49 years.

Recommendations for prioritization of influenza vaccine for the 2005–06 flu season

- Given the uncertainties in available doses of inactivated influenza vaccine and the timing of its distribution, the CDC recommends the following priority groups receive inactivated influenza vaccine until October 24, 2005:
 - persons aged ≥ 65 years
 - residents of long term care facilities
 - persons aged 2-64 years with co-morbid conditions
 - children aged 6-23 months

- pregnant women
- health-care personnel who provide direct patient care
- household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children aged <6 months

Beginning on October 24, 2005, all persons will be eligible to receive the vaccine. This prioritization does not apply to FluMist™.

Availability of influenza vaccine for Vaccine for Children (VFC) providers

- The Vermont Department of Health will again be supplying inactivated influenza vaccine to VFC-enrolled providers. This vaccine can be used for children aged 6 months through 18 years. However, vaccine should be used in accordance with the recommendations for prioritization, as vaccine is likely to be received and distributed in multiple shipments.

Providers with questions related to this Advisory are encouraged to call 800 464-4343. Also please refer to the Vermont Department of Health website: www.healthyvermonters.info for important information and updates related to influenza and influenza vaccine.